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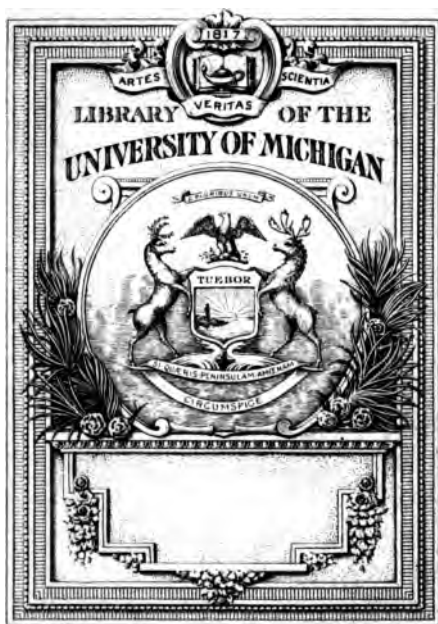
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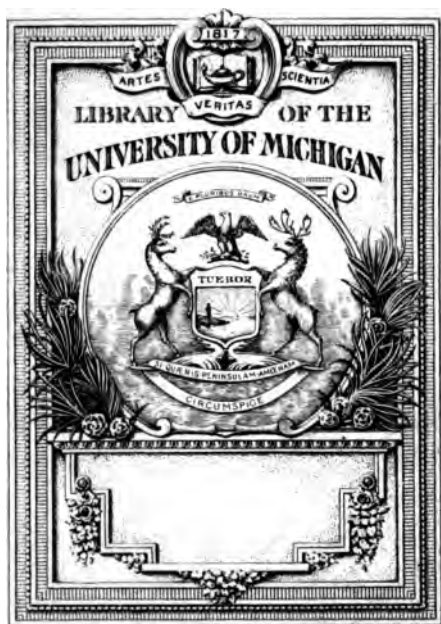
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THE
IRISH QUESTION:

A REPLY TO MR. GLADSTONE.

BY
THOS. E. WEBB, LL. D.,
*One of Her Majesty's Counsel;
Regius Professor of Laws, and Public Orator
In the University of Dublin.*

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THE IRISH QUESTION.

I.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE IDEA.

Let the Irish Nationalists but once become the arbiters of the fate of the two English Parties, and one or other of these political hucksters whose system of party government is so fast settling down upon the lees of its demoralization, will sell the unity of their Empire to defeat their rivals.—THE NEW LUCIAN.

THE General Election of 1886 will be as memorable in our annals as the General Election of 1832, and the appeal to the people, which resulted in the Convention Parliament of 1689. It was an election in which the constituencies were called upon to consider a change in the political system that amounted to a revolution. The decision of the people was as near an approximation to a plebiscite as the nature of our institutions would admit. A vast population, newly enfranchised, and to all appearance without a previous political education, was called on to regard the wisdom of all the

great statesmen of the past as folly, and to accept a folly of the Minister by whom they were enfranchised as the highest wisdom. To seduce them into authorizing the new departure the Minister exhausted all the electioneering arts of which an experience of fifty years had made him master. He appealed to them as the honest and unsophisticated masses. He invited them to crush the dishonest and interested classes. He told them that by a species of divine intuition they could determine questions which might have taxed the whole intellect of a Machiavelli or a Montesquieu. But it was all in vain. The new Democracy showed that it was animated by the imperial instinct of Milton's great and puissant people. It refused to authorize any tampering with the foundations of the Empire. It repudiated the idea of breaking up the United Kingdom. It insisted on the maintenance of the United Parliament in its undivided sovereignty and power. It would not hear of the Repeal of the great Act of Union by which the United Parliament, the United Kingdom, and the United Empire were created.

Deserted by his friends, defeated in Parliament, and disowned by the people, Mr. Gladstone, if he had been a cynic or a sage, would have retired to the woods of Hawarden, and resumed the ecclesiastical studies to which he intended to devote the remainder of his life in 1874. But quiet to quick spirits is a hell. Conscious that at the close of life he has lost prestige as well as place, the fallen statesman

has resolved, by one last effort, to rehabilitate himself before the country. Once more he has abandoned the platform for the press. In the case of his policy for the future government of Ireland, as in the case of his policy with reference to the Irish Church, he has thought it necessary to commit the vindication of his character to writing; and accordingly he has supplied the world with another *Chapter of Autobiography*, in the Pamphlet which he has just issued for our information and our learning.

The new Apology deals with two different sets of questions, one relating to the character of the statesman, the other concerning the continued existence and future welfare of the state. In the first set of questions the public has in a great measure lost its interest. How long the late Minister had been a secret convert to Home Rule, what covert intimations he had given to his countrymen of the fact of his conversion, under what circumstances he publicly proclaimed that he had been converted—these are matters of as little concern to serious men as if they related to his recently reported conversion to the ancient faith. The conversions of the late Minister have long ceased to excite even a sensation of surprise. But his Pamphlet raises higher and more important issues—issues in which the history of the past and the fate of the future are involved. Is the United Parliament a failure? Is the United Kingdom a mistake? Is the centre of the United

Empire to be shifted? And if the triple unity of Parliament and Kingdom and Empire is to be dissolved, by what are the existing relations between Ireland and Great Britain to be replaced? By a separation of the countries? By the subordination of the separate parliament of one country to the separate parliament of the other? By two parliaments mutually independent? By a federation of separate states? Or by intestine discord and fierce civil strife, again to end in subjugation? Compared with these questions, which touch our very being as a people, what can be more trivial than the discussion of questions of conduct and conscience with a fallen statesman? Mr. Gladstone says he has been charged with a 'grave offence'. He says he is confronted with the horns of a horrible 'dilemma'. He says he is accused of a 'plot against his friends', and of an 'attempt to carry the country by surprise'. To meet these charges Mr. Gladstone has published what he calls the *History of an Idea*. But the history of Mr. Gladstone's Idea is something more than a mere history of Mr. Gladstone's mind. It is offered to the world not merely as a defence of Mr. Gladstone, but as a defence of the principle of Autonomy for Ireland. It supplies a text-book for the followers of Mr. Parnell. It will take its place beside the *Autobiography* of Wolfe Tone in the library of Mr. Davitt. It is 'making history' (p. 9) like Mr. Carey. It will be a possession for ever to the Irish World.

That the proposal to concede a separate Parliament to Ireland was in fact a surprise to the country Mr. Gladstone incidentally admits. 'Twelve months ago', he says, 'the subject was almost as foreign to the British mind as the differential calculus' (p. 38). Was it as foreign to the mind of Mr. Gladstone? The Nationalism of Mr. Parnell stands to the Home Rule of Mr. Butt in much the same relation as the differential calculus of Leibnitz stands to the fluxions of Sir Isaac Newton—the one was a development and simplification of the other. Mr. Gladstone asserts that so far back as 1871 he had accepted the principle of *fluxions*. But in what sense? To ascertain this, let us see what Mr. Butt proposed, and how Mr. Gladstone treated the proposal. At the historic meeting, held in Dublin in May, 1870, the father of Home Rule proposed and carried a resolution that 'the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establishment of an Irish Parliament, with full control over its own domestic affairs'. This, it is obvious, is the principle of the scheme which Mr. Gladstone proposed in 1886; what did he think of it in 1871? At that time there was no Land League in existence; there were no Invincibles in Ireland; there were no Dynamiters in America; and though there was agrarian outrage there were no men marching through rapine and murder to the disintegration of the Empire. Mr. Gladstone at the moment was the head of 'the great administration', with a majority

of upwards of a hundred at his back. Everything was favourable to the proposal—the planets were in trine. Mr. Butt assured the world that, though ‘Parliament was to be broken up’, still ‘the Union of the Kingdoms under Her Majesty was to be maintained’ (p. 14). What, then, was Mr. Gladstone’s language? He says that his ‘language and conduct’ have been ‘governed by uniformity of principle’, and that he has ‘no change of opinion’ to vindicate or to acknowledge (p. 4). Mr. Gladstone refers us to his speech at Aberdeen on the 26th of September, 1871, as a record of the course he then adopted. ‘Instead of denouncing the idea of Home Rule’, he says, ‘as one in its essence destructive of the unity of the Empire, I accepted the assurance’ of Mr. Butt (p. 14). Accepting Mr. Butt’s assurance, that he intended to maintain the Union, in what manner did Mr. Gladstone treat Mr. Butt’s proposal? Let us judge him by his words. ‘Why is Parliament to be broken up?’ he asked, in tones of virtuous indignation. ‘Has Ireland a grievance? What is it that Ireland has demanded from the Imperial Parliament that the Imperial Parliament has refused?’ The practised orator then changed his tone. ‘It is stated’, he said, ‘that there is a vast quantity of fish in the seas that surround Ireland, and that if they had Home Rule they would catch a great deal of these fish’. The audience was convulsed with laughter. ‘What are the inequalities of England and Ireland?’ he asked; and he declared that he knew of none, except

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that Ireland was favoured in matters of taxation—a feeble case, he said, for a proposal by which ‘the fabric of the United Parliament was to be destroyed’. The audience cheered. The triumphant orator proceeded. ‘Can any sensible man’, he asked, ‘can any rational man, suppose that at this time of day, in this condition of the world, we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of the country, for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess for bestowing benefits through legislation on the country to which we belong?’ Every sensible and rational man in Aberdeen accepted this outburst as the words of sense and reason. According to the Pamphlet, however, the words were only used in an esoteric sense. Mr. Gladstone, in fact, tells us that instead of denouncing the Idea ‘in its essence’, he was only taking ‘a considerable step towards placing the controversy on its true basis’ (p. 14).

Let us see the next considerable step that Mr. Gladstone took. In 1874, Mr. Butt, who was then in Parliament, backed by sixty representatives of the Irish people, proposed to move, ‘That it is expedient and just to restore to the Irish Nation the right and power of managing all exclusively Irish affairs in an Irish Parliament; and that provision should be made at the same time for maintaining the integrity of the Empire, and the connection between the countries, by reserving to this Imperial Parliament full and exclusive control over all Im-

perial affairs'. The motion was refused by an overwhelming majority, which included Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, and Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. Stansfeld, and Mr. W. H. Gladstone.* Mr. Gladstone himself was absent from the division; but did he disavow the course which his trusted followers had taken in his absence? Let us see. In addressing the electors of Greenwich in January, 1874, he repudiated all idea of Home Rule, except in the form of 'local and subordinate authority under the unquestioned control of Parliament'. On the 16th of April, 1877, he wrote from Harley-street, that a statement to the effect that he supported the Home Rule agitation was 'an impudent fiction'. On the 26th of November, 1879, in addressing the people of Midlothian, he restricted Home Rule to Local Government, and identified Local Government with County Government, and said:—'I will consent to give to Ireland no principle, nothing that is not to be given to Scotland, and the different parts of the United Kingdom'. In March, 1880, he declared, at Juniper Green, that 'there was not a shadow of evidence to be produced in support of the charge' that 'the Liberals were disposed to break down the authority of Parliament by fostering the Home Rule movement'.† In one of his Midlothian

* *Hansard*, vol. ccxx., pp. 701, 717, 966-7.

† In March, 1880, Lord Hartington issued an Address, declaring his intention to offer a firm and consistent resistance to the agitation for Home Rule. According to a leading article of

speeches, delivered as late as the year 1885, he spoke as follows:—‘We are all, Gentlemen, every man, woman, and child, among us, convinced that it is the will of Providence that these islands should be bound together in a United Kingdom, and from one end of Great Britain to the other I trust there will not be a single representative returned to Parliament who for one moment would listen to any proposition tending to impair visibly, and sensibly to impair, the unity of the Empire’. The meaning of these declarations was obvious. There was not a man, woman, or child who did not receive them in their obvious sense. There was not a Scotch metaphysician who could detect in them a mental reservation or a double meaning. There was not an honest man in the whole Empire who conceived it possible that an English gentleman would scatter ambiguous words among the people like an ancient Greek,* degrade truth into an instrument of deception, and act on the

the *Times* of the 11th of March, 1880, ‘a meeting at which the leading members of Mr. Gladstone’s Ministry were present was held at Devonshire House for the purpose, it is understood, of taking into consideration this document of momentous import to the future of Liberalism.’ The document was apparently accepted by the meeting, for addresses in favour of the Legislative Union were immediately issued by Mr. Forster, by Mr. Goschen, by Mr. Childers, by Sir William Harcourt, and by Mr. Gladstone himself. It was under these circumstances that the speech at Juniper Green was delivered.

* Spargere voces

In vulgum ambiguas, et quaerere conscius arma.

maxim of Fouché, that the great object of language is to conceal our thoughts.

Mr. Gladstone denies 'that it is the duty of every minister to make known, even to his colleagues, every idea which he has formed in his mind' (p. 8). That is a perilous doctrine for an English statesman to advance. The injury inflicted on the fair fame of Peel by the Canning Episode in the great struggle of 1846 might have warned Mr. Gladstone of its danger.* But however that may be, there can be no doubt of *this*, that a minister who conceals his ideas from his colleagues has no right to employ his colleagues as blind instruments in carrying out an idea the reverse of that which he thinks proper to conceal. In his anxiety to avoid compromising himself he should be careful to avoid compromising them. In leaving loopholes for his own escape he should leave some loophole for his friends. Consider, for instance, the position in which Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, and Sir William Harcourt, and Lord Spencer stand before the public. If Mr. Campbell-Bannerman had received the slightest inkling of the *Idea* before he 'found salvation', and became the Kettle-drummle of Repeal, he would scarcely have denounced the doctrine of separate Parliaments as a 'political hotchpotch' which could never 'be ex-

* As to the Canning Episode, as Lord Beaconsfield called it, see his *Life of Lord George Bentinck*, pp. 193-206.

pected to produce a settled government, a contented people, and a United Empire'. If Sir William Harcourt had received a hint to hedge, that ponderous humourist would scarcely have described his present bedfellows in misfortune as 'eighty Irish guerillas'; he would scarcely have talked of 'leaving the Tories to stew in the Parnellite juice', in which he himself is at the present moment stewing. And Lord Spencer—*quantum mutatus ab illo*—if *he* had received the slightest intimation of the Idea, would he have denounced the whole ideal theory with an emphasis which he can neither repudiate nor recall? If he had been aware of the Idea, would he have said, as he did say in 1881, at Bristol, on the 14th of November:—'We must tell them plainly that no party in England, whether Conservative or Liberal, will put up with anarchy; and, what is more, that they are beating the air if they agitate for Repeal of the Union'? Would he have said, as he did say at Belfast on the 18th of June, 1884, that 'the statesmen of the nation, and the nation itself, will face their enemy with a determination not to be beaten; and they will not give up one point or idea which they consider necessary to maintain the United Parliament of England'? Would he have said, as he did say on the 3rd of September, 1884, 'I think it essential that the people of Ireland should not be deluded into believing that they are to get more concessions, but that they must be content with the

enormous concessions that have been made, and work and live accordingly?' Mr. Gladstone may have regarded himself not as Prime Minister, but as Sole Minister, like Walpole. He is a great man, and some allowance must be made for greatness. But let not our notions of greatness be formed on those of Jonathan Wild the Great. Let it not be considered that according to the English code of political honour a minister is at liberty to convert his colleagues into catspaws. Let us not entertain the idea that an English statesman, when intrusted with the reins of Government, is at liberty to drive a team of Cabinet Ministers in blinkers.

But in point of fact, has Mr. Gladstone been guilty of the disloyalty which his defence involves? When he spoke in 1871, and 1874, and 1879, and 1880, and 1884, may he not have meant what he said and intended to maintain the Union? As late as the 9th of November, 1885, he 'seriously and solemnly' warned the good people at Edinburgh, that though the Liberal Party might be 'honourable, patriotic, and trustworthy', yet 'it would not be safe' for it to enter on the consideration of 'the great constitutional question of the government of Ireland' if it were 'in a minority which might become a majority by the aid of the Irish vote'. This supplies the key to Mr. Gladstone's conduct. As it turned out, the Irish vote was master of the situation. The great statesman was in opposition. What was he to do? The difficulties of Japhet in search

of a Father, or Coelebs in search of a Wife, or an Irish Gentleman in search of a Religion, were as nothing to those of the Ex-Minister in search of a Majority. Everything that was honourable and patriotic and trustworthy required that he should be returned to power. Circumstances had changed. Could he not convert his minority into a majority by a conversion? The Ex-Minister resolved to take the Ex-Suspect for his spiritual guide. He was convinced; he was converted; he found salvation—and he was Minister once more. The fate of the early Christian, it is true, was reserved for the modern convert. the Minister became a Martyr. Like the early Martyrs, he leaves behind him an Apology. This Apology, however, is scarcely a success. If he was not guilty of a plot against his friends, at least he was guilty of an attempt to carry the country by surprise. The antedating of his conversion was a mere after-thought; and his Pamphlet in this respect is rather the *Idea of a History* than the *History of an Idea*.

The question of Mr. Gladstone's conversion suggests another question with regard to the late minister which has long exercised the minds of men. To what is the moral and political influence of Mr. Gladstone due? Is it due to the consistency with which he has maintained a definite set of opinions? No. He has revolved through the whole zodiac of change. He has successively been a High Tory—a Conservative—a

Why does G. find Home Rule right enough at the time?

Coalitionist—a Whig—a Liberal—a Radical—and a Red. He has undergone as many transformations as Proteus, as many transmigrations as Indur, as many stages of evolution as a protoplasmic cell. Is his influence due to the success of his legislative measures? Scarcely. He has proposed a dozen final settlements of the Irish Question. He has repeatedly prophesied an Irish Millennium. He has made a thousand promises to Parliament and to the country on behalf of Ireland. But not one of his promises has been made good; not one of his prophecies has been fulfilled; not one of his final settlements has been final. Is his influence due to the grave and majestic language, which Macaulay compared to the diction of the chorus in the Clouds? Undoubtedly, he has the *satis eloquentiae* of Sallust, whatever we may think of the scantness of his wisdom. But it is not to his mere declamation that the great demagogue is indebted for his power. Bishop Wilberforce had another theory upon the subject.* The influence of Mr. Gladstone, he said, was due to the fact that Mr. Gladstone was believed by the mass of his countrymen to be a man of high principle, who always acted and spoke according to his *conscience*. But this only raises another question which that grand old Churchman, the Archdeacon of Taunton, has discussed in an interesting pamphlet,

* *Our Premier*: Lord Palmerston's Forecast Verified (p. 4).

which he has entitled *Mr. Gladstone*.* The Archdeacon's brother, the oldest of Mr. Gladstone's Oxford friends, was of opinion that the right honourable gentleman never had a conscience (p. 37). Mr. Gladstone's Oxford Tutor, afterwards Dean of Peterborough, with a subtle appreciation of character worthy of Rochefoucauld, observed, that the conscience of Mr. Gladstone was so tender that he never would go straight (p. 35). A third opinion was formed by the present Dean of Durham, the Chairman of Mr. Gladstone's Oxford Committee, before Mr. Gladstone's form had lost all its original brightness in the eyes of Oxford; and that eminent ecclesiastic thought that the intellect of the right honourable gentleman could persuade his conscience of anything (p. 36). Let us reject each of these opinions and take a more charitable view. The fact of the case is that Mr. Gladstone is a conscientious man—a man so nicely conscientious that no consideration of his interest would ever induce him to do anything that he considers wrong—but a man whose conscience is so blinded by his congenital self-love that he never considers anything to be wrong which directly or indirectly conduces to his interest.

Of this curious fact the *History of an Idea* supplies a signal illustration. The landed pro-

* *Mr. Gladstone*. By George Anthony Denison, Vicar of East Brent, Archdeacon of Taunton. *Seventh Thousand*.

prietors of Ireland, with their wives and children and dependents, according to a calculation of Mr. Parnell's, amount in point of number to no less than 500,000 souls. That vast population, as everybody knows, has been half ruined through the legislation by which Mr. Gladstone, walking, as he said, in the divine light of justice, transferred their property to others. The Parnellites have openly declared their determination to complete the ruin which Mr. Gladstone has begun, and have proclaimed a war of extermination against the landlords, as ruthless as that proclaimed against the French proprietors by the Jacobins of France. Mr. Gladstone's intellect was too observant not to take notice of the fact, and his conscience was too tender to betray the callousness of Revolution. Besides, there was another matter to consider. Faithful among the faithless, his Abdiel, Lord Spencer, had a sympathy for the landlords, and insisted on a Purchase Bill as the condition of his adherence to the Bill for the Future Government of Ireland. Accordingly, Mr. Gladstone accepted the condition. His two Bills were to be inseparable as the Twins of Siam. Equity was to be combined with Policy. *He* was not the sanctimonious pirate who put to sea with a copy of the Ten Commandments suspended in his cabin, and the 'not' obliterated from the eighth. *He* would be no party to the robbery of the Irish landlords and the handing over of 500,000 souls to the Land League for extermination. In the House, the

eloquence of the right honourable gentleman glowed with a suffusion of the most virtuous warmth. 'Why should not the settlement of the land question be left to the Irish Parliament? Why should Great Britain undertake the solution of the question?' The voice of conscience answered. 'It is an obligation of honour and policy', said Mr. Gladstone, in a series of the most admirable phrases, 'that Great Britain should undertake it; we planted the landlords in Ireland, and we reconquered the country for them—we cannot give over Ireland to the worst of her feuds—we cannot wash ourselves clean and clear of this responsibility—Parliament will never under-estimate the moral obligation that may be comprehended in the settlement of the question'. The Numa Roumestan of M. Daudet could not have expressed himself more nobly. The right honourable gentleman, by the utterance of these elevated sentiments, satisfied his conscience—and secured Lord Spencer. Having satisfied his conscience, and secured the Peer, Mr. Gladstone put himself upon the country. The 'attempt to combine a large equity with policy' was unsuccessful. The policy was rejected, as Mr. Gladstone thinks, in consequence of erroneous notions as to the pecuniary results of the equity with which it was combined. That altered the whole moral aspect of the question. The Irish proprietors were 'the bitterest and most implacable of the political adversaries' of the right honourable gentleman, and a British Minister

was under no obligation to respect the rights of those portions of the public that oppose him. What was the ruin of 500,000 political opponents to a majority in the House of Commons? The conscience of the eloquent statesman turned chameleon. The right honourable gentleman's conception of honour was reversed, and, in spite of all his lofty eloquence in the House, the right honourable gentleman is willing to leave the landlords to their fate, and 'thinks it his *duty* explicitly to acknowledge that the sentence which has gone forth for the severance of the two measures is irresistible, and that the twinship, which has been for the time disastrous to the hopes of Ireland is severed' (p. 45).

When the bond between the Siamese Bills is severed, analogy would lead us to expect that each of the severed Bills would die. But this is not the view of the Father of the Twins. In his view the measure of equity is dead, but the measure of policy survives. 'The cause of Irish self-government', he says, 'lives and moves', and 'it will arise, as a wounded warrior sometimes arises on the field of battle, and stabs to the heart some soldier of the victorious army, who has been exulting over him' (p. 33). A simile which breathes nothing but the immortal hate and study of revenge which Milton attributes to the Fallen Angel! Before we are stabbed to the heart, however, let us consider what is the true character of our assassin, and how we may elude his blow.



II.

THE TRUE IDEA OF A HISTORY.

Were I an Irishman, I should certainly wish for a Union with England ; and as a general lover of liberty, I sincerely desire it, and for this plain reason, that an inferior country, connected with one much her superior in force, can never be certain of the permanent enjoyment of constitutional freedom, unless she has by her representatives a proportional share in the legislation of the superior kingdom.—MONTESQUIEU.

LET us take a brief retrospect of the history of Ireland, that we may understand the *History of an Idea*, in which all our previous ideas of history are confounded and reversed. From the landing of the Normans in 1169 to the Union of the Crowns in 1542, there was, strictly speaking, no political connexion between the countries. Forgetting that their commission from Pope Adrian was for 'the eradication of vice, the implanting of virtue, and the spread of the true faith', the invaders devoted themselves to the extermination of the Milesians, the planting of Norman garrisons, and the spread of their possessions through the land. They regarded the mere Milesian much as the settlers in New Zealand regarded the Maori. The only relation that subsisted between them was that of conqueror and conquered.

The first political Union of Ireland with England was effected by the Irish Convention, which enacted that the Kings of England should be taken to be Kings of Ireland, and should hold the 'stile, title, majesty, and honours of King of Ireland', as 'united and knit to the Imperial Crown of the Realm of England'. From 1542 to 1613 a succession of Lord Deputies, as representatives of the Crown, carried on the government by means of Proclamations, and Letters Patent, and Orders of the Privy Council. It is true Parliaments in theory existed. But, according to Coke, they were not so much Parliaments as assemblies of great men. According to Ussher, they were not so much Parliaments as Parleys. Moreover, these Parleys were merely the Parleys of the Pale; and the Pale in the time of Henry VIII. was so scant, that Davis compared its circuit to that of *Cynosura* round the Pole. So insignificant were these assemblies of the Pale that the very Palesmen considered it a grievance, if not an insult, to be summoned to attend them. Insignificant as they were, they were fettered by the provisions of Poyning's Law. Under the provisions of that law, they could not be summoned without the express authorization of the King; they could not entertain any project of law which had not been certified by the Irish Privy Council to the King, and returned as approved or altered, by the King in his Council of England; they merely possessed the power of rejecting, not that of proposing or altering, a law. Such as they

were, they were rarely summoned. Of the seventy years which elapsed from 1542 to 1612 Ireland was without a Parliament for sixty-seven. No man of Irish blood had ever sat in any of these assemblies till near the end of the reign of Henry VIII. During the whole of the reign of Elizabeth, and up to the eleventh of James I., the native Irish were out of the allegiance of the King—they were the King's Irish enemies, and not his subjects. In seventeen of the thirty-two counties into which Ireland was divided there was not a town that returned a burgess before the time of James, and the burgesses returned by the remaining fifteen were thirty only. The Irish Parliament, in fact, was the creation of James I.; and Sir John Davis was practically right when he said that the first free Parliament that ever sat in Ireland was that which was convened in 1613. But from 1615, when that Parliament was dissolved, till the year 1634, when Strafford convened a Parliament to register his edicts, there was again a Parliamentary interregnum, and the kingdom was still governed by the Crown.*

Lord Clare considered the accession of James I. as the era of the connexion between the Islands,

* Sir John Davis's *Discoverie*; Lord Clare's *Speech* on 10th February, 1800; M'Gee's *History of Ireland*, i. 335, 354; ii., 13, 30, 78, 88; Hallam's *Constitutional History*, chapter xviii; *The Irish Parliament*, by J. G. Swifte M'Neill—an excellent monograph upon the subject.

and he maintained that prior to that event there was no *Parliamentary Constitution* or Constitutional Government in Ireland. In the year 1641, the system of Dual Parliaments commenced. No sooner had it commenced than the Disunion of the Parliaments menaced the Union of the Crowns. Three times the free Parliament of Ireland has made a Declaration of Independence; and thrice the Declaration has been followed with similar results. The Irish Parliament made such a Declaration in 1641; and the great Insurrection followed. It made such a Declaration in 1689; and the two countries were involved in Civil War. It made such a Declaration in 1782; and after a brief and brilliant period of eloquent faction and patriotic tumult, the Independence of 1782 was followed by its demon, the Rebellion of 1798.

The inconsistency of this Duality of Parliaments with anything like unity of purpose, or of power, suggested itself to the master mind of Cromwell, who, by a hundred and fifty years anticipated the policy of Pitt, summoned Irish representatives to Westminster, and established a United Parliament as the sole legislative body of a United Realm. The United Parliament met for the first time in the year 1654; but unfortunately it had a brief existence, and with the Restoration the Irish Parliament was restored. From 1666 to 1689 no Parliament was convened, and legislative power was assumed by the Lord Lieutenant and Council. In 1689 the Parliament of James II. met, and it was followed by

the Re-conquest of the Island. The Revolution, which undid the work of the Restoration in other respects, neglected to restore the Union. It restored it as far as Scotland was concerned, but in Ireland the old Duality was permitted to remain. Forthwith the old troubles began to reappear. The unity of the Executive constituted the sole bond of union between the kingdoms, and the Parliaments, like coupled hounds, were ever pulling in opposite directions. As early as 1692 the Irish Parliament was at variance with England on the Articles of Limerick, on the Act of Settlement, on the Toleration Act, on the origination of Money Bills, on the admission of Catholic officers into the Service of the King. In 1698 the two Parliaments were at issue on 'the subordination and dependence that Ireland hath and ought to have on England as being united and annexed to the Imperial Crown'. There was a commercial conflict, as well a conflict of jurisdictions and a conflict of laws, between the countries. The misery of this state of chronic disunion soon found its constitutional expression. On the 22nd of October, 1703, the Irish House of Commons addressed the Queen, and implored her to concede a firm and strict Union between Ireland and England, as the only measure that could remove their wrongs. On the 25th the Lords voted a similar address. In 1707 both of the Irish Houses again addressed the Queen, beseeching Her Majesty to extend to Ireland the blessings of the Union

that had recently been carried out with Scotland.* It was in vain. The English Government, in its infatuation, refused to listen to the request. The theory of duality was destined for a *reductio ad absurdum*. To secure the dependence of the Irish Parliament on the British Crown, the provisions of Poynning's Law, which during the Protectorate lay in abeyance, had been revived. To secure its subordination to the Parliament of Great Britain, the Act of 6 Geo. I. declared that the King's Majesty, with the consent of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain in Parliament, had power to make laws to bind the people of Ireland. As might have been expected, the laws made to bind the people of Ireland, by a Parliament in which the people of Ireland was unrepresented, were unrighteous and unwise. As might have been expected, the Irish Parliament, stung with the sense of injustice, converted itself into a constant source of trouble to the parliamentary government in England. In 1753 the application of the Surplus Revenue of the country occasioned a bitter dispute between the Parliament and the King; and, in the words of Hallam, the great parliamentary history of Ireland began.

In the period from 1753 to 1782 Lucas and Flood and Grattan, made their reputations; but the country made no progress. It was a country in which, according to the description given by his

* Froude's *History*, i. 335; Lord Clare's *Speech*.

Viceroy to the elder Pitt, law had lost its energy and the magistrate his power. The Dublin mob was rampant. The Irish Opposition was acting in concert with the Opposition in England. The Irish cause was openly identified with that of the Americans. The Volunteers enrolled themselves; and in 1782, matters reached a crisis. America had declared its Independence. Great Britain was engaged in war. Grattan was at the head of a hundred thousand men in arms. Ireland's opportunity had arrived, and, by the voice of Grattan, she, too, demanded *Independence*. The English Ministry were alarmed. Mr. Fox entreated Grattan to desist. Lord Rockingham was at his wits' end. A Mr. Ogilvie, a hanger-on of the Duke of Leinster, formed the idea of a measure of compromise, which he thought might meet the crisis, and forthwith revealed it to the Duke of Portland. The Lord Lieutenant regarded the proposal as a 'middle term', which might answer the purpose of the ministry, and at once communicated it to Mr. Fox. He explained the expedient to be an 'Act of Parliament, to be adopted by the legislatures of the respective kingdoms, by which the superintending power and supremacy of Great Britain, in all matters of state and general commerce, will be virtually and effectually acknowledged'. This expedient Mr. Grattan's biographer regards as a 'chimerical idea', which none but a 'shallow observer' of events could ever have propounded. But the idea of Mr. Ogilvie was the late Minister's Idea; and the idea

of Mr. Ogilvie was as unceremoniously rejected by Mr. Fox as the Idea of Mr. Gladstone was rejected by Lord Hartington, and Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Bright. Mr. Fox was not a man of middle terms or chimerical ideas. He was no shallow observer of events. With a reluctance which nothing but irresistible necessity could have overcome—to use his own language when speaking of the commercial propositions of 1785—he resolved on compliance with the strong current of prejudice in the nation. Accordingly, he bent before the storm. He proposed and carried the repeal of the declaratory Act of 6 Geo. I.; and when Lord Abingdon, in the House of Lords, proposed to introduce a bill ‘to assert in the Parliament of Great Britain the sole and exclusive power of *external* legislation,’ which Mr. Gladstone’s Bill asserted, Mr. Fox arose in his place in the House of Commons, and said that his intention, when he proposed the repeal of the declaratory Act, ‘was to give a full, complete, absolute, and perpetual surrender of the British legislature and judicial supremacy over Ireland’.*

Mr. Fox thought that this unconditional surrender to the demands of Ireland would be accepted as a *final adjustment* of all questions between the countries. But he was speedily undeceived. In 1783 a military convention was assembled in Dublin to extort Parliamentary Reform and

* *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Mr. Grattan*, by his Son. vol. ii., pp. 273, 285, 291, 294, 351, 354.

Catholic Emancipation from the Parliament that was independent. Fox was thoroughly alarmed. He wrote an energetic letter to the Lord Lieutenant. 'If either the Parliamentary Reform, in any shape, however modified, or any other point claimed by the Bishop of Derry and his Volunteers be conceded', he said, 'Ireland is irretrievably lost for ever'. 'England', he said, 'is reduced low enough, God knows; but depend upon it, if we shall be tried—if year after year we are to hear of granting something new, or acquiescing in something new, for the sake of pleasing Ireland—I am sure you must feel as I do on the subject'. In a similar strain he wrote to the Commander of the Forces. 'Did not England', he asks, 'make that ample and correspondent concession'—the concession of 1782—'for the direct and avowed purpose of precluding the necessity of future demands and concessions?' 'Unless such demands were met in a proper spirit', he said, 'the result would be civil war or separation'.* The momentary storm blew over. But it was not merely on questions of Parliamentary Reform or Catholic Emancipation that the two Parliaments were out of tune. In the crisis of the Declaration of Independence the Portuguese had refused to admit Irish manufactures into their ports, and it was seriously proposed in the Irish Parliament that the King of England, as the King of Ireland,

* Grattan's *Memoirs*, vol. iii., pp. 106, 111, 113, 114, 115.

should declare war against the Portuguese, independently of England.* The Parliaments were engaged in an envenomed controversy as to the commercial relations of the two countries as early as 1785. In 1789, on the question of the Regency, Ireland, through the action of her Parliament, to use an expression of Lord Clare's, was for weeks in a state of actual separation from Great Britain. Having absolute control over the finance of Ireland, the Irish Parliament could always exert an influence of the most dangerous character on the policy of the Empire. True, Poyning's Law, even after the Revolution of 1782, remained partially in force. True, no bill could become law in Ireland until it received the approbation of the Crown under the Great Seal of Great Britain. True, no Irish Act had the force of law unless the parchment on which it was recorded bore the Great Seal of England on the right side as well as the Great Seal of Ireland on the left. The bridle of the law existed; but Parliament took the bit in its teeth, and defied the bridle. It refused to execute English judgments. It passed votes of censure on the Lord Lieutenant. It sent Parliamentary Commissioners to London. It voted short Supply Bills. It voted short Mutiny Bills. It drove the Executive, which constituted the sole bond of union between the two kingdoms to despair.

* Barrington's *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*, p. 91. This dispute between Ireland and Portugal is not alluded to by Mr. Froude.

And what was the *domestic state* of Ireland during the period of its independence? In 1783 the capital was in the possession of an armed convention, and during the whole period of independence it lay at the mercy of the mob, which menaced the lives of obnoxious senators, and invaded the senate-house itself. Peaceful citizens were torn from their beds and tarred and feathered, and turned into the streets of Dublin. The Levellers, the Whiteboys, the Right Boys, the Hearts of Oak, the Hearts of Steel, and the Peep-o'-Day Boys were all up and doing. The Agitator was as rampant as at present. Then as now the Press teemed with incentives to assassination. As there was no security for property or for life, so the distress, which follows insecurity as its shadow, was all but universal. From 1783 to 1800 the Parliament was inundated with petitions, not only from the great manufacturers and merchants, but from the tanners, the shoemakers, the carpenters, and the bricklayers, complaining of the ruin of their trade.* In 1785 there were fifty thousand artisans out of work. Resolutions to import no goods from England were carried by acclamation. A general system of bounties was adopted. There was a general clamour for protective duties against British manufactures. In

* The details and the dates of these petitions are given in the masterly speech of Dr. Ball, when Attorney-General for Ireland, in opposition to the Resolution moved by Mr. Butt in 1874. *Hansard*, ccxx. 723. This speech ought to be reprinted.

1786 there was an agrarian insurrection in Munster which disarmed the Protestants of the province, and laid them under contribution. In 1794 the peasantry of the western counties were in arms, and mutilation and murder were as rife as they are at the present time in Kerry. Coercion Acts, under the form of Whiteboy Acts, Insurrection Acts, and Acts for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act were as familiar as they have been since. As early as 1784 exceptional legislation was required to prevent the soldiers of the King from being hamstrung in the public streets. As early as 1784 a conspiracy had been formed for a separation from England and the establishment in Ireland of the Roman Catholic religion. In 1790 the Club of the United Irishmen was founded to sever the connexion and to establish a republic. In 1796 the French fleet was in Bantry Bay at the invitation of the patriots; and in 1798 the rebellion, which had been smouldering for years, burst forth into flames, and involved the whole island in its conflagration.*

It was obvious that the *Union of the Crowns* had failed to establish harmonious relations between the countries. From 1542 to 1800 the Crowns of the two countries had been united, and what had been the result? The Crown had exercised its powers with nominal parliaments, with dependent parliaments, with a parliament which was ostentatiously

* Froude's *History*, ii., pp. 432, 435, 436, 444, 445, 449, 495.

independent; and still there was no union. The attempt to manage the refractory parliaments of Ireland had tried the temper and defied the wit of generations of successive statesmen. The 'dulce ways' and 'politic drifts' of Wolsey, the 'thorough' of Wentworth, and the 'management' of Walpole, all had failed. In vain had Lord Deputy and Lord Lieutenant handed over the whole patronage of the country to syndicates of greedy nobles; in vain had they purchased patriot after patriot by peerage, by pension, and by place. Conciliation and concession and corruption, all alike had failed. Driven to desperation, the Ministers of William had seriously thought of abolishing the parliamentary constitution of the country. The Lord Lieutenant of the Great Commoner had suggested the holding of the country by military force. Townshend had recommended the Crown to fall back upon the hereditary revenue, and dispense with Parliamentary supplies. Portland had suggested to Fox the alternative of total separation. The Duality of the Parliaments paralysed the unity of the Executive, and neutralised every advantage that should have resulted from the Union of the Crowns. For two hundred and sixty years the Crowns had been united, and at the end of that period the connexion was menaced by a nationalist conspiracy, a fanatical rebellion, and a demand for an Irish republic under the protectorate of France.

It was obvious that the separation of the countries would be the inevitable end, unless a Union of

the Parliaments as well as a Union of the Crowns could be effected. It was obvious that a *Legislative Union*, a Union of the Legislatures, was the sole escape from ruin. It was no novel or revolutionary idea. It was the idea which had been realised by the great Protector. It was the idea which had been entertained by both the Irish Houses a century before. It was an idea which had been entertained by philosophers as well as by practical politicians. Molyneux, when stating *The Case of Ireland*, had expressed his regret that the representation of Ireland in the Parliament of England was 'a happiness we can hardly hope for'. Maxwell, in his *Essay on a Union* had described the refusal of England to admit Irish representatives into her Parliament as one of the grievances of Ireland. Berkeley, in his *Querist*, had asked 'Whether it be not the true interest of both nations to become one people? and whether either be sufficiently apprised of this?' In the year 1753, when the dispute about the Surplus Revenue had brought matters to a crisis, the press swarmed with able pamphlets in favour of incorporation.* Montesquieu had conversed with Charlemont upon the subject, and had recommended a Union to the future commander of the Volunteers. 'Were I an Irishman', he said, 'I should certainly wish for it; and, as a general lover of liberty, I sincerely desire it, and for this plain reason—that an inferior country, connected

* Barrington's *Rise and Fall*, p. 139.

with one much her superior in force, can never be certain of the permanent enjoyment of constitutional freedom, unless she has by her representatives a proportional share in the legislature of the superior kingdom'.* There were Irish patriots who saw this truth as clearly as the illustrious Frenchman. Even Yelverton, who in 1779 had been denounced as a Seneschal of Sedition, and who, in 1781, had made himself conspicuous in procuring the modification of Poyning's Act, and the Repeal of the Act of Geo. I.—even Yelverton, as early as 1782, had come to the conclusion that a Union, such as that which he actually supported in 1800, was the true interest of Ireland. For seven years before the event, Fitzgibbon, the clearest intellect that ever approached the contemplation of Irish affairs, had been pressing upon the King's Ministers the urgent necessity of a Union as the last resource to preserve the country to the British Crown. The Union was in fact inevitable. How else could the Catholics be emancipated? How else could the franchise be extended? How else could the animosities of three races be controlled? How else could the jealousies of three religions be extinguished? How else could the unity of the two countries be secured?

In 1800 the people of Great Britain, so blind to the true interests of the Empire in 1703 and in 1707, had at length become conscious of the folly

* Hardy's *Life of Charlemont*, vol. i. p. 70.

of Disunion. The manufacturing jealousy of 1698 and 1703 and 1707 was no longer felt. The fear which Pelham entertained of the effect which Irish members might produce on the British Parliament was disregarded. The opportunity was seized by Pitt. So strong was the opinion in favour of his great measure that Mr. Grey's motion to suspend proceedings on the Union till the sentiments of the people of Ireland should be ascertained was negatived by a vote of two hundred and thirty-six against thirty. In Ireland opinion was divided. The project of a Legislative Union was opposed by the leaders of the Bar ; for it interfered with the Parliamentary ambition of the successful lawyer. It was opposed by the citizens of Dublin ; for it interfered with the profits of their trade. It was opposed by the Protestant minority ; for it menaced the ascendancy which the minority enjoyed. But it was supported by the Catholics, who then, as now, constituted the majority of the Irish people. In fact, the Union was their only chance of securing emancipation and reform. How could a Protestant Parliament be expected to give admission to a majority, whose first step would be a repeal of the Act of Settlement, under which every Protestant estate was held? Even Patriots like Flood and Charlemont recoiled before the danger. Barrington asserts that on the question of the Union 'the Catholic Bishops were generally deceived into the most disgusting subservience' to the Castle. Subservience, or no subservience, the historical fact of the Catholic support

remains. The true exponent of Catholic opinion was Plowden. As the advocate of the Catholic interest Plowden wrote pamphlet upon pamphlet to show that an incorporating Union with Great Britain was the only means of redressing Irish grievances and crushing the perpetual feuds by which Ireland was distracted. The Catholic Bishops and Gentry may have been lulled asleep by what O'Connell described as the hopes of advantage ambiguously held forth; but Mitchel admits that the 'cheated and deluded Catholic Bishops' addressed the Castle in favour of the Union. Mr. Grattan's Biographer reluctantly records the fact that ten Roman Catholic Prelates, including the four Metropolitan Bishops, signed a declaration in its favour—that in its favour the Catholics of Tipperary presented an address to the Lord Lieutenant—that the Catholics of the city of Waterford and its vicinity resolved, at a General Meeting held on the 28th of June, 1799, 'that a complete and entire Union between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal and liberal principles, and on a sense of mutual interests and affections, is a measure of wisdom and expediency for this kingdom, and will effectually promote the strength and prosperity of both'. Even Mr. Lecky, who is no admirer of Mr. Pitt, admits that a considerable portion of the Catholic priesthood was influenced in favour of the measure, and that their flocks were chiefly passive. It may be that the petitions in favour of the Union were less

numerously signed than those against it; but education as well as power was the monopoly of the Protestants, and the Catholics were content to be represented by their clergy. Lord Castlereagh, in the United Parliament, when advocating Catholic Emancipation as the necessary complement of the Union, declared 'that he would be a base and ungrateful man if he were not ready to acknowledge that the Catholics had materially assisted in accomplishing the measure'.*

Mr. Gladstone inveighs against the means by which the Union was carried; but he has not a word to say in reprobation of the methods by which it was opposed. It was opposed by every expedient that faction could suggest. The Press was subsidised to write against it. The mob was roused. A Pistolling Club was proposed to remove the supporters of the Government, and the proposal, as Sir Jonah Barrington informs us, was approved of by no less a man than Mr. Grattan. A project was formed to *outbuy* the Minister, as Mr. Grattan's Biographer terms it, and £100,000 was subscribed for that purpose by the leaders of the Opposition. Barrington was deputed by the opponents of the Government to treat for the purchase of a single borough at the price of £8000. At the opening of the session of 1800 the anti-Union party offered

* Barrington's *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*, p. 433; Mitchel's *History*, ii. 37, 123, 137; Grattan's *Memoirs*, v. 51, 52, 57, 58; Sir George C. Lewis's *Administrations of Great Britain*, p. 193; Lecky's *Leaders of Opinion*, p. 181.

no less a sum than £5000 in ready money for a single vote against the Union.* Peerages, it is true, were granted by the Government to its political supporters; lawyers, it is true, who voted for the minister were promoted to the Bench; compensation, it is true, was granted to the gentlemen who, according to the custom of the times, were the proprietors of boroughs. Mr. Gladstone describes this as 'unspeakably criminal' (p. 11). But we must judge things by a reasonable standard. There never was a more uncompromising patriot than Sidney; and yet Sidney accepted money from Barillon. There never was a sterner moralist than Hallam; yet Hallam distinguishes between the case of a man who takes a bribe to betray his principles and the case of a man who accepts a gratification to promote them. 'The Liberal Party of 1800', Mr. Gladstone says, 'had the honour of resisting the Incorporating Union' (p. 52); but he forgets that the Liberal Party of 1707 had the honour of carrying an Incorporating Union of equal importance; and he raves against the means employed by Pitt in carrying the Union with Ireland, in the same tone as that in which the Jacobites ranted against the means employed by Somers in carrying the Union with Scotland.† But let us be consistent, The Pa-

* Barrington's *Rise and Fall*, pp. 441, 488; Mr. Grattan's *Memoirs*, v. pp. 70-74; Sir George C. Lewis's *Administrations*, p. 197.

† Smollett's *Continuation of Hume*, vol. ii. pp. 242-250.

triotis who opposed the Union were as anxious for their reward as any of the Unionists who figure in the Black List of Sir Jonah. Moira was made Governor-General of India; Ponsonby was made Chancellor of Ireland; Curran was made Master of the Rolls; Grattan himself demanded that some 'provision' should be made for Hardy. Let us come nearer home. Has Mr. Gladstone never conferred a Peerage on a political supporter? Has he never promoted a political supporter to the Bench? Has he never employed patronage to aid his party? Mr. Gladstone is a classical scholar, and, it is said, keeps up his classics—let him remember what was written by the Roman Satirist of the complaints and accusations of men like Gracchus, and Clodius, and Milo. The world in which we live is not a Platonic Republic, and men of the world do not expect to find the morality of Plato even in the votaries of the Idea. But let us talk as Politicians and not as Pharisees, or Pecksniffs. At the worst, the corruption by which Pitt managed the Parliament of Ireland was not worse than the corruption by which Walpole managed the Parliament of Great Britain; and as a wholesome plant may spring from a noxious soil, so we are indebted to one of these great men for a Constitutional Dynasty, and to the other for a United Kingdom.

III.

THE FOUR CONDITIONS.

The people that in the presence of the great military monarchies of Europe shall come to the conclusion to divide its sovereignty into fractions would seem to me, by that sole fact, to abdicate its power, and perhaps its existence and its name.—
DE TOCQUEVILLE.

THE question for a patriotic statesman is, not whether the Irish Parliament was properly abolished, but whether it can be prudently restored. On the importance of the subject of a separate Parliament and a separate Government for Ireland Mr. Gladstone is emphatic. 'It is a subject', he says, 'which goes down to the very roots and foundations of our whole civil and political constitution' (p. 20). He candidly admits that it is 'a question involving such an amount, and such a kind of change', as 'to make it a duty to look rigidly to the conditions upon the fulfilment of which alone it could warrantably be entertained' (p. 4). Of such conditions Mr. Gladstone enumerates four; and of these four conditions, on the fulfilment of which the legitimacy of Mr. Gladstone's scheme depends, we now proceed to show that not a single one has been fulfilled.

Take the first and primary condition that the Idea 'could not be entertained, except upon a final surrender of the hope that Parliament could so far serve *as a legislative instrument for Ireland*, as to be able to establish honourable and friendly relations between Great Britain and the people of that country'. It is strange that the great legislative genius of the age should so readily confess the utter failure of all his previous legislation. The pamphlet assigns no reason for the 'final surrender' of the late Minister, but refers us for his reasons to his speech on the introduction of his Bill. And what were his reasons in his speech? The law, he says, comes to Ireland in a foreign garb. Why may we not say the same of Scotland? 'Scotland', he says, 'has been allowed and encouraged in this House to take her own course as freely and effectually as if she commanded a representation six times as strong as she has'. Why may not the same thing be done with Ireland? 'My firm belief', said the right honourable gentleman on a former occasion, 'is that the influence of Great Britain in every Irish difficulty is not a domineering and tyrannising, but a softening and mitigating influence'.* When did this firm belief receive a shock? We stand face to face with Irish nationality, he says. Let us see what Irish nationality has to say against the Union.

To form a satisfactory judgment on the point,

* *Hansard*, vol. clxxxi. p. 721.

let us recall what the United Parliament has actually done for Ireland. During the twenty-five years which followed the Union the tonnage of the Irish ports was doubled. In less than forty years the commerce of Ireland was quadrupled. The export of grain and meal was six and a-half times as great in 1845 as it had been in 1800. From 1845 to 1852 the country was desolated by famine; but from 1852 to 1879, the state of Ireland was one of scarcely interrupted prosperity and progress.* Its contented condition in 1880 was admitted by Mr. Gladstone in a famous speech. Patriots talk of the responsibility of Parliament for the great famine of 1847. But the famine of 1847 was not greater than the famine of 1740; and while the Irish Parliament did nothing to relieve the one, the United Parliament voted ten millions to relieve the other. The Imperial Exchequer has been the constant resource of Irish misfortune; the Imperial credit has been pledged without stint or scruple for the promotion of Irish undertakings. Mr. Gladstone, in his craze for legislation, speaks of the failure of the United Parliament as a legislative instrument. Let us see what the legislative instrument has accomplished. From the year 1800 to the year 1815 the United Kingdom was involved in a

* See the statement submitted to the late Prime Minister by the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, entitled the *Union Vindicated*, and printed as a Parliamentary Paper, No. 117, under the date of the 16th of April, 1886.

struggle for existence, and the United Parliament had little leisure to devote itself to the amendment of the laws. From 1815 to 1829 the complete emancipation of the Catholics was delayed, not so much by the indifference of Parliament as by the conscientious scruples of the Prince. In 1829 the Catholic demand was granted. No sooner was it granted than fresh demands were made, and O'Connell raised the cry of *Justice or Repeal*. And what has been the response of the United Parliament to the demand for justice? O'Connell demanded complete municipal freedom; and the United Parliament passed the Irish Municipal Act, which has handed over the management of every corporation in Ireland to the Irish people. O'Connell demanded the disestablishment and the disendowment of the Church of Ireland; the United Parliament has complied with the demand, and the great State Establishment has ceased to be. O'Connell demanded Fixity of Tenure for the occupying tenant; and the United Parliament has granted not only Fixity of Tenure, but Freedom of Sale, and Fair Judicial Rents. O'Connell demanded the protection of the Ballot and the extension of the Franchise; the United Parliament has granted the Ballot and has made the Franchise so wide that it scarcely can be wider. The United Parliament has conferred on Ireland a series of Acts for the Relief of the Poor, for the Medical Relief of the humbler classes, for the gratuitous Education of the People. It has passed Acts to enable the farmer to become the

proprietor of the land he holds, and to enable the labourer to live in comfort on the land he tills. It has even given the people of Ireland a Jury Law which enables it in every offence of a popular nature to set the Executive at defiance. What more could an Irish Parliament do than the United Parliament has done? What has the United Parliament left for an Irish Parliament to do? Are we to undo the work of the Union, and create a separate Parliament for Ireland, in order that the patronage of the country should be transferred to the enemies of England? The game is scarcely worth the candle. Are we to create it in order to enable it to exclude English merchandise from Irish markets? That can scarcely be expected. Are we to create it in order that the Protestant religion may be, not persecuted, but quietly got rid of in 'the more Christian and charitable way' of Mr. Parnell? The Nationalist Party is full of vaunts on the subject of its toleration. Are we to create it in order to enable the Irish people to exterminate the Irish landlords? Even Mr. Gladstone shrank from that. What, then, is the grievance that is required to be removed? Mr. Gladstone, in his historic speech at Aberdeen, declared that 'there is no such grievance'. 'There is nothing', he said, 'that Ireland has asked, and which this country and this Parliament have refused'. If that declaration was true fifteen years ago, it is true at present. Of what grievance has Ireland to complain? The Extremists are truc-

lently candid in their answer to the question. 'We have no grievances', they say; 'we advance no reasons; we simply say we want a certain thing, and we shall have it because we think fit; else indiscriminate slaughter'.

Does the Irish people adopt this diabolical dilemma? The question brings us to the second of Mr. Gladstone's primary conditions. The demand of a separate Parliament for Ireland, he says, is not to be conceded 'unless the demand for it were made in obedience to the unequivocal and rooted desire of Ireland, expressed through the constitutional medium of the Irish Representatives' (p. 5). When Mr. Gladstone was clothed, and in his right mind, he could inform his hearers that, desirable as it might be to comply with the desires of Ireland, there was something higher than conciliation, and that was duty. Duty, however, with Mr. Gladstone is a shifty thing. Let us disregard duty for compliance with desire; and if the people of Great Britain so determine, let vengeance listen to a fool's request. But has the request been made? Does the desire exist? Has the condition been fulfilled? The population of Ireland amounts to somewhere about five millions. Of those five millions, a million and a-half of Protestants regard Mr. Gladstone's Idea with unutterable fear and hatred. Of the remaining three millions and a-half, at least half a million of Catholics are animated by the selfsame feeling. Of the remaining three millions

one-sixth can neither read nor write, and are as
unable to understand the demand for Home Rule
as to understand Mr. Gladstone's differentials.
The experience of Earl Cowper 'taught him to
believe that, for its own sake, Home Rule was
really not desired by any body in Ireland'—'that
by many it was desired as a step towards sepa-
ration, and that by many more it was desired
as a step towards avoiding the payment of rent'.
The experience of the Liberal Lord Lieutenant is
confirmed by that of the founder of the Land League.
'No party or combination of parties in Ireland',
wrote John Devoy to the Editor of the *Freeman's*
Journal, in December, 1878, 'can ever hope to
win the support of the majority of the people,
except it honestly proposes a radical reform of
the land system'. The land system has under-
gone 'a radical reform'; but those who are
benefited by that reform are now alarmed. The
strong farmers, as they are called, are in secret
terror of the men whom they ostensibly sup-
port. They are afraid of their labourers; they
are afraid of a land tax; they are afraid of a
nationalization of the land; they are afraid of a
perpetual restraint on their liberty of action. In
a separate Irish Parliament they know that the re-
presentatives of labour would predominate. With
a separate Irish Administration, they know that a
land tax would be the first financial resource.
They are afraid of the confiscation of their interest
in the land by Mr. Davitt. They are weary of

their subjection to a Vehmgericht of vagabonds, whom they regard with loathing qualified by fear. Mr. Gladstone's rooted and unequivocal desire is not the rooted and unequivocal desire of Ireland—it is only the rooted and unequivocal desire of an Ireland beyond the seas. It is only the rooted and unequivocal desire of the Fords, and the Egans, and the Rossas, and the Patriots who planned the murders in the Park. It is only the rooted and unequivocal desire of the enemies of England. On this point we are not left to mere inference; we have a demonstration of the fact. Seven-eighths of the money subscribed for the Land League came from beyond the seas, and of the remaining eighth a large portion was subscribed by Irreconcilables who were not Irish. Mr. Gladstone requires that the wish of Ireland should be expressed through a constitutional medium. What is the constitutional medium through which Mr. Gladstone views the opinions of the Irish people? When the 'gentlemen' who 'wished to march through rapine to disintegration and dismemberment of the Empire' were opposed to Mr. Gladstone, it was Mr. Gladstone's interest to proclaim the truth. Accordingly, at Knowsley he said: 'Our opponents are not the people of Ireland; we are endeavouring to relieve the people of Ireland from the weight of a tyrannical yoke'. He proclaimed at the Guildhall that his 'greatest fear' was 'that the people would be terrified out of the exercise of their con-

stitutional rights'.* Such were his public utterances in 1881. And who are the men whom he now affects to regard as the constitutional representatives of Ireland? They are the very terrorists whom he formerly denounced. They are men elected in a moment of wild excitement, by a newly-emancipated mob, under the compulsion of the separatist clubs, in the midst of an agrarian crisis, fomented by money contributed by a foreign foe. These men are not the true representatives of Ireland—they are the delegates of the dynamiters in America, by whom they are employed. And employed for what? To contribute to the wisdom of the nation? To consult for the welfare of the Empire? To help in the solution of any legislative problem? No. They are paid to convert Parliament into Pandemonium, and to fulfil the prophecy of Mr. Grattan.†

* *Times*, 28th of October, 1881; *Ibid.*, 14th of October, 1881.

† Mr. Lecky, in his *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland* (p. 205), states that Mr. Grattan, 'with his usual odd emphatic exaggeration', once said to an English gentleman, 'You have destroyed our Parliament, but we shall have our revenge—we will send into the ranks of *your* Parliament, and into the very heart of *your* Constitution, a hundred of the greatest scoundrels in the kingdom'. It would be interesting to know what is Mr. Lecky's authority for this remarkable anecdote. Curran, in a speech on Catholic Emancipation in 1796, makes an incidental allusion to the Union, and affects to foresee a United Parliament, in which 'fifteen or twenty Irish Members might be found every session sleeping in their collars under the manger of the British Minister'. Mr. Pelham thought with Mr. Grattan.—*Froude*, iii. 163.

Let us come to Mr. Gladstone's third condition. A separate Parliament, he says, is not to be conceded, unless the demand for it were 'so defined as to bring it within the limits of safety and prudence, and to obviate all danger to *the unity and security of the Empire*' (p. 5). To think that all danger to the unity and security of the Empire can be obviated by the definition of a demand is not political wisdom—it is dotage. The dynamiter will scarcely allow himself to be fettered by a definition. Even Mr. Grattan exclaimed, 'Perish the Empire', when he thought the interests of the Empire conflicted with the interests of Ireland. But let us consider the late Minister's condition. Let us see whether the Unity of Parliament, the Unity of the Kingdom, and the Unity of the Empire would not, each of them alike, have been destroyed by his malign proposal.

Mr. Gladstone complains that the opponents of the measure of 1886 'habitually describe it as being that which they know it not to be' (p. 39). Unfortunately, Parliamentary language, like the language of the Houyhnhnms, has no short word of denial for one who says the thing that is not. 'Because they conceive it to tend to separation', he says, 'they describe it as being in itself Separation—because they think it would bring about Repeal of the Union, they describe it as being a Repeal of the Union' (pp. 38–9). And on Mr. Gladstone's own showing they describe it rightly. For what, on Mr. Gladstone's own

showing, is the essence of the Union? In his speech introducing his Home Rule Bill he said:— ‘I define the essence of the Union to be this—that before the Act of Union there were two independent, separate, co-ordinate Parliaments; after the Act of Union there was but one’. This United Parliament Mr. Gladstone proposes to destroy; these separate Parliaments he proposes to restore. Is it, then, unfair to say that Mr. Gladstone’s measure was, *ipso facto*, a Repeal of the Union? And are not separate Parliaments a separation? Lord North, in proposing a measure of postage in 1783, said ‘it was certain that Great Britain and Ireland had become to each other, in point of political power, as foreign nations’. Lord Grenville, in his speech upon the Union, said that ‘if the Parliaments were to remain distinct and separate, the bond of connection between the countries was null and void’. Lord Palmerston expressed his conviction that ‘a Repeal of the Union was tantamount to a separation of the two countries and tantamount to a dismemberment of the Empire’.* Is it, then, unfair to say that Mr. Gladstone’s scheme of separate Parliaments amounted, *in itself*, to Separation?

But let us come to facts. The question of Repeal is one for statesmen, and not for a schoolman trained in the quibbling of the schools. The countries, it seems, are to remain united;

* Sir George Cornewall Lewis’s *Administrations of Great Britain*, p. 176; *Hansard*, vol. lxx., p. 1066.

what is their present bond of union? Clearly, it is not the mere Union of the Crowns; for the Crowns were united from 1542 to 1800, and during the whole of that period, with the exception of the Protectorate, the two countries were as separate as Hanover and England. It is the Union of the Parliaments, combined with the Union of the Crowns, which effectuates the Union of the countries. It was by the Union of the Legislatures that the Legislative Union of the countries was effected. It was by the creation of a United Parliament that Pitt created a United Kingdom. Mr. Gladstone, it is true, talks of the 'three kingdoms' of England, Scotland, and Ireland, as if they were still subsisting (p. 34). He might as well talk of the five kingdoms of the Milesian Irish, or the seven kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons. There is no kingdom in the British Isles but one—the United Kingdom, represented by the United Parliament, which Mr. Gladstone proposes to destroy. It is this United Kingdom, with its United Parliament, which is the central force of the United Empire. That Empire consists of a vast number of conquests, colonies, and stations unconnected with each other, but each connected by its own individual tie with the United Kingdom. These ties are various in their strength. The tie may be a mere gossamer thread, or it may be a bond of iron. It may be so strong, as in the case of India, that even an Indian Mutiny would fail to burst it; or it may be so weak, as in the

case of Canada, that a mere wish would be sufficient to destroy it. But it is only by its relation to the United Parliament of the United Kingdom that the Empire in any sense can be said to be united. It is the United Parliament alone which is paramount in India, under the Indian Acts of 1858 and 1861. It is the United Parliament alone which is paramount in the Colonies, under the Colonial Act of 1865. Deprive the United Parliament of one of its constituent elements and you destroy it. Destroy the United Parliament, and it is scarcely too much to say that in a strict constitutional point of view you leave the Empire without any Parliament to which it owes allegiance.

Even though we grant that the measure of the late Minister was not in itself separation, its tendency to separation is beyond dispute. 'Why should Ireland be ready', Mr. Gladstone asks, 'to enter upon a desperate contest of strength with a people six times her number, of twelve times her wealth, inferior to her in no single element of courage or tenacity?' In point of sound policy there is certainly no reason why. But nations, like individuals, sacrifice their interest to passion; nations, like individuals, as we are told by a great moralist, go mad. If it is madness for Ireland to engage in a contest of strength with England, she has for seven centuries been liable to fits of madness. But in her madness there was always method. The Desmonds, the Tyrones, the O'Neills, the Tyrconnells, the Tones, the Fitzgeralds,

and the Emmets never dreamt of engaging in a single-handed contest with a preponderating power. They relied on the assistance of the Pope, of the King of Spain, of the Catholic Princes, of the King of France, of the Directory, of the First Consul, of the Dutch, of any foreign power that was the enemy of England. What has happened in the foretime may happen in the future. And is England, at the bidding of any madman, to hand over an island on her flank to be organized by a hostile executive as a camping-ground for a possible invader?

‘Never’, says Mr. Gladstone, in his Pamphlet, ‘did separation become a substantive idea in Ireland until the one unhappy period, when the warlike instincts of France coincided with that infatuation of the British Government, which in Ireland raised tyranny and sanguinary oppression, as well as the basest corruption, to their climax’ (pp. 42-3). A bold assertion! The right honourable gentleman is a universal genius. He affects a smattering of omniscience. He is great on the Catalogue of Homer, and the Cosmogony of Moses, and the Vatican Decrees. His admirers say that he is a connoisseur in art and music and old china.* But he knows nothing of the Irish people, or of the History of Ireland. True, he informed the knot of Nationalists whom he received at Hawarden that he had been endeavouring to master the spirit and

* See that pleasant book, Mr. M’Carthy’s *Short History of Our Times*, p. 131.

meaning of Irish History. But the whole history of Ireland will require to be re-written if we are to accept Mr. Gladstone's Idea of its scope. The rebellion of Tyrone, as Essex wrote to Elizabeth in 1599, had no other end but 'to shake off the yoke of obedience' to the English Crown, and 'to blot out all remembrance of the English nation'. The motive of the insurgents of 1641 is expressed in a saying recorded by the author of *The Cromwellian Settlement*, that 'they would rather pull God out of his throne, or throw themselves headlong into the sea, than become loyal to the Crown of England'. The Confederates, in 1650, sent ambassadors abroad to offer the Protectorate of Ireland to any 'Catholic Prince, State, Republic, or Person' who would undertake 'the preservation of the Catholic religion and nation'. In 1689 the green banner of Independence floated over the Bermingham Tower, with the inscription, 'Now or Never—Now and Forever'. In default of independence, Tyrconnel offered to make Ireland a province of the King of France. It was no new device. The Irish Princes had entered into a treaty with Francis I. for the expulsion of the English. The Princes of Tyrconnel and Tyrone had bound themselves to recognize 'whosoever was King of France as King of Ireland also'. The purpose of the Irish Jacobites, in 1689, who did not wish to see their country converted into a French Province, was to erect it into a distinct State under the protectorate of France. It was to French aid that patriot and

priest and peasant looked for the restoration of the *Vetus Hibernia* in 1762. In 1784, when the Parliament of Grattan was in the heyday of its prime, Napper Tandy, the chief of the artillery of the Volunteers, drank the health of Louis XVI. upon his knees, and declared for separation. In 1790, while Grattan's Parliament was still young, Wolfe Tone, relying upon France, enrolled the United Irishmen, with a view, as he himself has recorded, 'to subvert the tyranny of our execrable government, to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils, and to assert the independence of my country'.* In 1796, as in 1759 and in 1691, a French fleet was off the coast of Ireland, with the object of wresting Ireland from the British Crown. Why should a British statesman calumniate his country? The rebellion of 1798 was not caused by the sanguinary oppression of the British Government; what he calls the sanguinary oppression of the British Government was only the stern putting forth of

* The *Itinerary* of Fynes Moryson, Part ii. p. 35; Prendergast's *Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 330; M'Gee's *History*, ii. 35, 146, 174; Macaulay's *History*, ii. 315; Froude's *History*, ii. 449; Mitchel's *History*, i. 335. If Mr. Gladstone would condescend to study Irish History under Mr. Mitchel, he would cease to libel the memory of poor Wolfe Tone by representing him as at any time of his career a friend of the connexion. 'I soon formed my theory', he writes, 'and on that theory I have unvaryingly acted ever since'. This theory is contained in the passage in the text; and it was Mr. Mitchel's *History*, i. 331.

British strength to suppress a fanatical rebellion fomented by a foreign power. The habit of looking to France for aid against Great Britain had not died out in 1848. In that eventful year the deputies of Young Ireland solicited encouragement and arms from Lamartine, and returned to Dublin with an Irish Tricolour, surmounted by a pike-head. Nor even now is this desire for separation a matter of the past. In the rabble rout that followed the triumphal car of the Earl of Aberdeen no emblem was displayed but the Harp without the Crown—no flag was flaunted but the Stars and Stripes. Is further proof required? Take the speech of the Parnellite delegate, Mr. Redmond, delivered at Chicago in the present year. ‘The principle at the back of this movement to-day’, exclaimed that candid orator, ‘is the same principle which formed the soul of other Irish national movements in the past—rebellion against the rule of strangers’. ‘It is the principle’, he continued, ‘which Owen Roe O’Neill vindicated upon the banks of the Blackwater—the principle which inspired Tone and Fitzgerald, and for which Emmet sacrificed his life’. These words, we are told by the American papers, were greeted with ‘thunders of applause’; the entire audience, we are told, stood up and cheered. Were their cheers unmeaning? Were their thunders the mere roll of a theatrical machine? Was the orator, like Lucio, merely speaking according to the trick? Was he merely attempting to raise the wind? Was

he obtaining money under false pretences? No. The delegate of Mr. Parnell meant what he said, and what he meant was Separation.

That separation is, and must be, the goal of Irish Nationalism, was clearly seen by Mr. Mitchel. Mr. Mitchel was no shuffling and equivocating politician. Like the Achilles of Homer, he abhorred the man that said one thing and meant another as he abhorred the gates of hell. When the Treason-Felony Act was passed, he styled himself an Irish Felon. He made no secret of his treason; he made no effort to disguise it; he was an honest enemy of England. And if ever there was a man who understood the logic of Irish disaffection it was he. In speaking of the English Colony in Ireland, Mr. Mitchel, in his *History*, observes, that 'it was out of the question that it should be united on a footing of equality with its potent mother-country by the golden link of the Crown, because the wearer of that Crown was sure to be guided in his policy by English ministers, in accordance with English interests; and, as the army was the King's army, he could always enforce that policy' (i. 121). And this is the view of Mr. Parnell's American allies—the Sheridans, the Walshes, the Byrnes, the Brennans, and the Egans, of the Land League. One of their orators gave utterance to their common sentiments at a meeting at which they were all of them assembled. 'Was it merely amendment of the Land Laws they wanted? No. Was it simply a little freedom in County Boards? No. Was it merely

to put a few Irishmen instead of Englishmen in Dublin Castle? No. Was it to have a Parliament in College Green, with the golden link of the Crown? No. All they wanted was that they should let Ireland alone. Ireland wanted Separation—absolute Separation’.* These words reflect a lurid light on the utterances of Mr. Gladstone’s ally, Mr. Parnell. Mr. Parnell, it is true, has denied the utterance of the words, but they stand recorded in the *Irish World*, and they are the logical conclusion of his teaching. ‘None of us’, he is recorded to have said at Cincinnati, on the 23rd of February, 1880—‘none of us—whether we are in America or in Ireland, or wherever we may be—will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England’.

This brings us to Mr. Gladstone’s fourth condition. In his view it is not ‘allowable to deal with Ireland upon any principle, *the benefit of which could not be allowed to Scotland* in circumstances of equal and equally clear desire’ (p. 5). Here a new aspect of the character of Mr. Gladstone is presented to our gaze. Imitating the example of the ‘gentlemen’ who ‘wish to march through rapine to disintegration and dismemberment of the Empire’, he seems intent on ‘the placing of different parts of the Empire in direct hostility one with

* *New York Daily News* of the 3rd of February, 1884.

† *The Irish World* of the 6th of March, 1880.

another'. Rudely awakened by the English vote from his delusion that he was the only man who could govern England, he has abjured the ungrateful country.* At the private theatricals with which he entertained the Nationalists at Hawarden, he proclaimed himself to be 'a man entirely of Scottish blood'. In his Pamphlet he dwells on the 'sanguinary oppression', 'the base corruption', and 'the superlative iniquity' of the British Government in Ireland (p. 43); but in his Speech introducing the Purchase Bill, he says that 'the Scotch people may thank God that, as a nation, they have no responsibility for the dreadful history of the relations between Great Britain and Ireland'—the whole responsibility was England's. In the presence of England's enemies at Hawarden, he again thanked God for that inestimable blessing; there was a stain, he said, but it was a stain on England. 'Scotland', he says in his Pamphlet, 'has approved our Irish Policy by three to two, Ireland herself by four and a-half to one, and gallant Wales by five to one' (p. 33)—the only enemy of Ireland is England. 'If England', says the Pamphlet, 'thinks one way in the proportion of three to one, she can outvote Scotland, Ireland, and Wales together, although they were each and all to return the whole of their numbers to vote against her' (pp. 34, 5). 'This', says Mr. Gladstone, 'is not a partnership of three

* 'Oh, William knows he is the only man who can govern England'.—*Mr. Gladstone*, p. 39.

kingdoms, or of four nationalities, upon equal terms'; 'the vast preponderance in strength of one of them', he says, 'enables her to overbear the other three, and to reverse their combined judgment' (*ibid*). Here we have a remarkable coincidence of thought. Mr. Gladstone accepts the premises of Mr. Mitchel. The Scottish Statesman adopts the reasoning of the Irish Felon. The loyal subject argues against the Union of the Parliaments as the avowed traitor argued against the Union of the Crowns. Let us see what the argument amounts to.

In order to destroy the strength of England, Mr. Gladstone is ready with a new *Idea*; and that we may understand his position with respect to this Idea, let us take a historical retrospect once more. Every measure which Mr. Gladstone has proposed with reference to the Irish Church, the Irish Land, and the future Government of Ireland, is more or less a plagiarism from Mr. Butt. The agitation on these subjects dates from Mr. Butt's return to the Irish Bar in 1863. In a series of pamphlets characterised by great knowledge, and eloquence, and reasoning power, Mr. Butt brought each of these questions within the sphere of political discussion. He inaugurated the Irish Revolution. He was, in fact, what he secretly conceived himself to be, the Irish *Mirabeau*. In the year 1870 Mr. Butt published a remarkable Essay, entitled *Irish Federalism* as a clear and definite proposal. In that Essay

every argument that could be adduced against the Union, every argument that could be adduced in favour of Federation, was brought forward, and urged with a force and moral fervour of which Mr. Gladstone's Pamphlet is but a pale reflection. In 1871 that Essay had reached its third edition, and on its title-page there was the heading, *Home Government for Ireland*.^{*} What followed? Mr. Gladstone took up the gauntlet thrown down by Mr. Butt. He took it up at Aberdeen. 'What are we to say to this learned gentleman?' he said, making his celebrated appeal to every sensible man, to every rational man, throughout the country. Here we have a crucial experiment as to the real opinions of Mr. Gladstone on the question of Federation. Did he dilate on its possibilities of good? Did he dwell on its chance of bearing wholesome fruit? Did he even say, in the words of his present Pamphlet (p. 22), that the corn-field was not ripe, and that the time for action was not come? He did nothing of the sort. He covered the idea with ridicule. He indignantly denounced it as an attempt to destroy 'the fabric of a United Parliament'. He indignantly denounced it as a measure 'to disintegrate the capital institutions of the country'. He solemnly protested against it as an unmitigated evil. At that time Mr. Gladstone was sincere, he

^{*} *Home Government for Ireland—Irish Federalism: Its Meaning, its Objects, and its Hopes.* By Isaac Butt. *Third Edition.* Dublin: 1871.

was conscientious, he was honest. Who doubts it? Who denies it? He was Prime Minister of England, with a majority of a hundred at his back.

Mr. Gladstone is now as conscientious, as honest, as sincere, as he ever was; but he is now in a minority, and he has changed his mind. He is of opinion that 'the vast preponderance in strength' of one of the four nationalities enables it to overbear the other three (p. 34). He maintains that not only Ireland, but Scotland and Wales, may ask themselves whether the 'system of entrusting all their affairs to the handling of a body English in such overwhelming proportion as the present Parliament is, and must, probably, always be, is an adjustment which does the fullest justice to what is separate and specific in their several populations' (p. 36). He feels assured 'that the desire for *Federation*, floating in the minds of many, has had an unexpected ally in the Irish policy of 1886; and that, if the thing which that term implies contains within itself possibilities of practical good, the chance of bringing such possibilities to bear fruit has been unexpectedly and largely improved' (p. 37). Strange to say, as the whole of this line of reasoning was anticipated by Mr. Butt, so it was also anticipated by a famous man, whom the genius of Macaulay has consigned to an evil immortality—Barère. Barère looked upon the vast preponderance of Paris as the bane of France. Barère was of opinion that France would never enjoy a really good government till the Alsatian people, the Breton people,

the people of Bearn, the people of Provence, should have each an independent existence, and laws suitable to its own tastes and habits. Barère maintained that the only possibilities of good to France lay in breaking up the consolidated France of the monarchy, and superseding it by a French federation of republics.* But the very Jacobins were shocked at the idea. They regarded it as treason. They were determined that France should present a united front to the European Coalition, and they saved their country.

It is strange that a Statesman of pure Scottish blood should not be aware that the experiment of Federation has been already tried in Scotland, and that it has ignominiously failed. The Union of England and Ireland in the sixteenth century, that of England and Ireland and Scotland in the seventeenth, and that of Great Britain and Ireland in the eighteenth, were all examples of what is known among writers on the subject as an *Imperfect Federal Union*. They were cases of several states having separate political institutions under one executive. They were cases of several Parliaments and a single Crown. In Ireland, as we have seen, the system failed; and its failure was as conspicuous in Scotland as it was in Ireland. From the time of James I., the Scotch were constantly complaining of the vast preponderance of England; and to the time of the Union they were constantly asserting their national inde-

* Macaulay's *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 248.

pendence. In 1699 the Scottish Parliament all but involved England in a war with Spain on the subject of the Darien Company, just as the Irish Parliament in 1781 all but involved England in a war with Portugal on the subject of the Methuen Treaty. In 1703 the Scottish Parliament passed an Act of Security, which provided that no Sovereign of England should be recognised as Sovereign of Scotland, save upon security given to Scottish interests. The English Parliament, as was natural, became incensed. Alarmed for the Union of the Crowns, it passed an Act declaring the natives of Scotland aliens until they should settle the Crown on the House of Hanover. In retaliation the Scottish Parliament passed an act allowing trade with France, which was then at war with England; and, in self-protection, English ships of war were ordered to seize the ships of Scotland engaged in the obnoxious traffic. With this experience of a federal connection, and its possibilities of good, and its chance of bearing fruit, it is no wonder that Somers in 1707 rejected the Scotch proposals of a federative rather than a legislative union, and repudiated the policy which the Statesman of pure Scottish blood once more proposes for the benefit of Scotland.*

The prescient wisdom of Somers has been shown by subsequent events. Since his time the most perfect example of a *Federal Union Proper* which the

* Macaulay's *History*, iv. 295; Green's *Short History*, p. 697.

world has seen has been elaborated by the sober skill of the illustrious men who framed the Constitution of the United States. It was no easy task that devolved upon them. The descendants of the Cavaliers in the South had but little sympathy with the descendants of the Roundheads in the North. The social systems of the North and South were as different as those of Christendom and Turkey. In their political ideas, and in their commercial views, in their domestic institutions, the two sets of States were as distinct as in their geographical position or their climate. It was necessary, however, to combine them for purposes of mutual defence, and a Federal Union was adopted. But what was the result? For long and troubled years the North, in order to maintain the Federal Union, made concession after concession to conciliate the South; but it was in vain. At last the South, in its infatuation, resolved to put matters to the touch. After repeated threats of secession, the South determined to secede. It attempted to break the federal tie, just as Ireland attempted to break its federal tie in 1641, and in 1689, and in 1798. At the time Mr. Gladstone justified the secession, and declared that Jefferson Davis had created a nation. But the master of phrases was mistaken. As the Federal system had proved no safeguard against the rise of divergent interests, and mutual jealousies in the states of which it was composed, so it afforded no protection against the preponderating strength of the states which happened to

be strongest. By the preponderating strength of the North the judgment of the South was overborne. By the preponderating strength of the North domestic slavery was abolished. By the preponderating strength of the North the insolence of the Southern traitors was tamed, their turbulence was controlled, and by seven years of military government they were finally coerced into submission to the law.

The present is no time for floating ideas, or possibilities of good, or chances of bearing fruit on a subject such as *Federation*.* We cannot allow the country to be made the sport of ideas, or possibilities, or chances. The primary notion of a system of separate states is mutual separation; and a divided sovereignty is the first condition of their imperfect union. With a divided sovereignty there will be a divided allegiance; and the allegiance to the separate state, the authority of which comes home to men's business and bosoms, will always be more powerful than the allegiance to the central power, the authority of which is vague, and indefinite, and distant, and always liable to be defied. With a divided sovereignty, moreover, there is divided power, which is another name for weakness—a weakness which deprives the Executive of

* As to the conditions under which Federation is possible or expedient, see Lord Brougham on the *British Constitution*, pp. 403-408; Freeman's *History of Federal Government*, p. 3; Dicey's *Law of the Constitution*, p. 166; de Tocqueville's *Démocratie en Amérique*, i. 282.

all unity of counsel and all promptitude in action, when such unity and promptitude are most required. Of the inherent weakness of the most perfect of federal unions, when assailed by a foreign power, a striking example is given by de Tocqueville. In the war of 1812, the President of the United States, as commander-in-chief, ordered the military forces of the North to the frontier. The interests of Connecticut and Massachusetts were injured by the war; and Connecticut and Massachusetts refused to obey the order.* Similar symptoms manifested themselves in the Parliament of Ireland. A stinted Bill of Supply, and a stinted Mutiny Bill, were the favourite resource of disaffection; and to emphasise the arbitrary power of the Irish Parliament over grants of men and money for Imperial purposes, Grattan carried a grant of one hundred thousand pounds and twenty thousand men to aid Great Britain in its war with France, as a mark of *gratitude* for the grant of Independence. What would be the attitude of the Americanized Ireland which Mr. Gladstone proposes to create in the case of a war with the United States? What would be its attitude in the case of a war with France? What, within our own recollection, has been the attitude of Ireland with reference to Arabi Pasha, and the Mahdi, and the Boers? The federation of the world may be the dream of the poet; but the statesman

* de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, i. 285.

is not permitted to indulge in dreams. The motto of Belgium is the motto of modern Europe—*l'Union fait la Force*. Italy, to use the words of Byron, has made the Alps impassable; and how? Her principalities and kingdoms have united. The triumph of the great master-mind of modern Germany has been a Union which it is the aim of his life to consolidate into one firm and compact incorporation. And what is the true wisdom of the people of these Islands? At all costs and at all hazards to maintain the Union. Against the venomous utterances of one discredited and defeated man let us set the warning voice of the great genius who made the American Democracy the study of his life, and embodied his conclusions in a work which is immortal. Let the Politicians, the Parliament, and the People of the United Kingdom take his words to heart. 'The people', says de Tocqueville, 'that, in the presence of the great military monarchies of Europe, shall come to the conclusion to divide its sovereignty into fractions, would seem to me, by that sole fact, to abdicate its power, and, perhaps, its existence and its name'.*

* de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, i. 287.

IV.

THE TRUE IDEA.

The old argument, that there could be no other way found out, was renewed, and urged with more earnestness and confidence, and that they who were against it might be obliged to offer their advice what other course should be taken; and this was often demanded in a manner not usual in this place, as a reproach to the persons. His Majesty himself, with some quickness, was pleased to ask the Chancellor what he did advise, to which he replied, 'that if in truth what was proposed was in the nature of it not practicable, or, being practised, could not attain the effects proposed, it ought to be laid aside, that men might unbiassedly apply their thoughts to find out some other expedient'.—CLARENDON.

SIR HENRY JAMES, in his masterly speech on the Bill for the Future Government of Ireland, referred to the words of Clarendon as prescribing the course which it was his duty to adopt in dealing with the question. The eminent lawyer who sacrificed the seals to his conscience was as wise as he was high-minded. In great emergencies the first step towards determining what to do is to determine what cannot possibly be done. The maxim of Clarendon, in fact, is only a form of the aphorism of a far greater and more comprehensive genius. It is a form of Bacon's profound generalisation that the only method of arriving at a true theory is after the exclusion and rejection of every theory that is

false. It is the method, in the words of Bacon, *quae post rejectiones et exclusiones debitas necessario concludit*. This is the true inductive method, and that method is as applicable to the discovery of political truths as it is to the discovery of the laws of nature.

What, then, are the measures with reference to our future relations with Ireland which we must reject? What are the things which we are determined not to do? We have to deal not only with Ireland, but with the Irish World in America, and the Irish World in America proclaims 'that every arrangement short of *Separation* must leave Ireland in the position of a Province'.* That is the conclusion of Tone and Mitchel, and if Mr. Gladstone were a consecutive reasoner it would be the conclusion of Mr Gladstone also. This Idea must be peremptorily rejected. That the two islands are to remain united by some bond or another must be accepted as a political axiom. Coleridge, more than once gave expression to the opinion that the dangers to be feared from the Independence of Ireland were not comparable with the evils resulting to England from the Union.† But this view is at present backed by no party, by no person of influence or power. True, separation is the idea of the Dynamiters and the Revolutionary Brotherhood, and the Clan-na-Gael. But the will of the United Kingdom has been expressed,

* The *Irish World* of the 8th of May, 1886.

† Coleridge's *Table Talk* (Bohn's Edition), pp. 145, 187.

and the edict of an imperial people has gone forth, and the mandate has been given to its rulers; and as far as Separation is concerned we are ready, if required, to bid defiance to the world.

‘The more one reflects on the question’, says the *Irish World* in America, ‘the plainer it becomes that there is no other alternative than total Separation and *Federation*; the former is our maximum and the latter our minimum demand’. This minimum, with its possibilities of good, and its chance of bearing fruit, Mr. Gladstone seems willing to concede (p. 37). But even he will be unwilling to concede it in the form officially demanded. ‘The only satisfactory Federation’, in the opinion of the *Irish World*, would be one which not only gives to Ireland complete control over her local affairs, but also ‘allows her to exist as a Democratic Republic in partnership with Monarchical England’. It must be a Federation which would at once ‘get rid of the detestable incubus of a Viceregal Court’. It must be a Federation, from the banquets of which, in the words of Mr. Parnell’s organ, ‘the toast of the Queen would disappear for ever’.* Definite and clear as such an idea may be, it is an idea only to be compared to some monster, half-horse, half-griffin, which a herald blazons on a scutcheon. It is not so much an idea as a mere chimera.

* The *Irish World* of 17th of April, 1886; *United Ireland* of 5th of September, 1885.

In his speech of the 13th of April, 1886, Mr. Gladstone observed that 'there can be no Federation except you have a *Legislative Body*, entitled to act for the people' to be included in the Federation. Let us inquire, then, into the various forms under which a separate Legislative Body might be conceived for Ireland. Is it to be an independent Parliament, such as was constituted in 1782? Or is it to be a dependent Parliament, such as existed under the declaratory Act of 1719? Or are both of these alternatives to be rejected?

As to a *Grattan Parliament*, in the very nature of things it can never be revived. The King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland are no more. The King of Ireland abdicated when the Royal Assent was given to the Act which created the United Kingdom. The Lords Spiritual of Ireland were annihilated by the Church Act, and the Lords Temporal have been deprived of all influence by the series of Land Acts by which their property and territorial power have been transferred to others. The Commons of Ireland are now an uncontrolled democracy, elected under what is practically the manhood suffrage of the Act for the Extension of the Franchise. Every element which went to the composition of the old Parliament is gone; and it would be as possible to revive the old Irish Assemblies on the Hill of Tara as to revive the Parliament of Grattan. And even if it could be revived, it would be madness to revive it. That the powers which it exercised were incompatible with Imperial authority is admitted by the Na-

tionalists themselves.* Its existence was fraught with peril to the connexion; and its revival would merely inaugurate a Re-conquest or a Separation.

The *Gladstone Parliament*, like the Parliament of Grattan, is a mere memory of the past. The Pamphlet speaks of the Bill as 'lately buried, but perhaps not altogether dead' (p. 21). But if the Bill has been buried alive it cannot be said that beauty's ensign is crimson on its lips. Mr. Spurgeon spoke of it as the measure of a madman. Mr. Bright publicly proclaimed that there would not be twenty sensible men found to support it, apart from the authority of Mr. Gladstone. Even the *Irish World* derided it as a fantastic and preposterous plan. And fantastic and preposterous it was. No statesman, no man of ordinary intelligence that knew anything of the history of Ireland, could believe that Ireland would rest satisfied with a measure that deprived her of all control over her military force, of all control over her trade and commerce, of all control over her customs and excise, of all control over the form of government under which she was henceforward to exist. No one could believe that Ireland would be content to be governed by an English viceroy, to be garrisoned by English troops, to pay tribute to the English exchequer—to be a mere dependency of England. Mr. Gladstone, it is true, affected to believe it;

* *Ireland: A Book of Light on the Irish Problem*. Dedicated to Mr. Gladstone by the Editor, Andrew Reid (p. 87).

but what was the ground of his belief? Was it founded on the nature of things, or the past history of the country? No. 'An incident of the most vital importance had happened', says the right honourable gentleman—'one of those conditions which were, in my view, essential' had been fulfilled (pp. 6, 7). Mokanna had assumed the veil of moderation. Mr. Parnell, with his eighty-four Home Rulers at his back, had accepted the statutory and subordinate parliament, as a final settlement of all questions between the countries. There was to be a new era of everlasting peace between the English lion and the Irish lamb. The eighty-four Home Rulers had sworn it 'to a man'—and the great statesman of the age, with the simplicity of Sancho, believed that the devil must needs be an honest fellow, and a good Christian, else he would not have sworn by heaven and by his conscience.

Within the last few days a public organ of mendacity in the service of Mr. Gladstone has announced that the Government has secured the co-operation of Lord Hartington in support of a measure for the establishment of four *National Councils* representing the four Provinces of Ireland. On the instant the Press Association was authorized by Lord Hartington to contradict the statement. This was only what might have been expected from that sober and sagacious statesman. Lord Hartington, unlike Mr. Gladstone, has lived in Ireland, and knows it well. Lord Hartington, unlike Mr. Gladstone, has studied the history of Ireland and

mastered the lessons which it teaches. Lord Hartington, unlike Mr. Gladstone, has an intellect which is not subject to illusion. He is a statesman. To the prophetic eye of a statesman the consequences which would flow from the establishment of four National Councils are as obvious as if they were presented to the sight. The Councils for the four provinces would not long condescend to remain provincial. They would adjourn their sittings to Dublin, and meet in the Rotunda under the presidency of some new Earl of Bristol. The Nationalists from Ulster would attend. The four National Councils would transform themselves into a National Convention. The National Convention would enjoy all the privileges of a National Parliament without its constitutional powers; and the absence of constitutional powers would be supplied by all the appliances of tumult that are now in force.*

What, then, is the conclusion of the entire matter? The Idea of Separation and the Idea of Federation must be rejected. The Idea of a Separate Legislative Body cannot possibly be entertained. The Idea of an Irish Parliament, whether

* The above remarks had scarcely been printed when their justice was confirmed upon what may be called authority. On the 12th of October the fortnightly meeting of the National League was held, Mr. T. M. Healy presiding. In the course of his remarks that gentleman—whose influence is only second to that of Mr. Parnell—referred to the scheme of the *Four Provincial Councils* in the following terms:—‘His idea was that if Mr. Chamberlain succeeded in bringing in the principles of the Heptarchy into this country, what would happen would be this, that if the Government proposed to divide the country by any

independent, like that of Mr. Grattan, or dependent, like that of Mr. Gladstone, or equivocal, like that of Mr. Gladstone's organ, must be excluded. Autonomy is only Greek for Independence. What, then, remains for us to do? Lord Randolph Churchill, in a speech characterized not only by eloquence and courage, but by great sobriety and wisdom, has declared the intentions of the Government, of which he is the mouthpiece to the people. He has stated, in the most explicit terms, that the Government does not intend to grant Home Rule in any form, or to become responsible for any legislation that contains its germ. But this, as Lord Randolph observed, is not enough. We cannot allow the anticipations of Pelham to be realized. We cannot allow the prophecy of Grattan to be fulfilled. We cannot allow the Irish Members to degrade the United Parliament, and by degrading, to destroy it. The battle of the Union is but half won till the United Parliament is secured, not only against treason from without, but against obstruction from within.

scheme of this kind, the leaders of the people would very easily checkmate it by dividing themselves amongst the four provinces, and these gentlemen could come together afterwards—a public executive with power and without responsibility—and thus practically keep the proceedings of these four councils as a unit, and direct the policy which would be taken up, both administrative and otherwise, by these four different bodies. This scheme would never satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people, and would be only used as a lever for more'.—*Daily Express*, 13th of October, 1886.

But this is not the only task that devolves upon a wise and patriotic government. Mr. Gladstone tells us that the only alternative for his Idea is *Coercion*, and that coercion requires two things, 'the autocracy of government and secrecy of public transactions'. These are but wild and whirling words. The maintenance of public order in Ireland requires neither autocrat nor secret council. It requires neither a Strafford nor a Cromwell. It merely requires a statesman with a little honesty, a little firmness, and a little common sense. The advanced thought which favours compulsory temperance, and compulsory education, and compulsory vaccination should hardly stand aghast at the compulsory enforcement of the Ten Commandments; and yet, in reality, this is the only coercion that is required either for the people of Ireland or for the people of Great Britain. In every country, under every government, *exceptional legislation* may be required for exceptional disorder. The atrocious outrages committed in Manchester and Sheffield some twenty years ago entailed the exceptional legislation of 1867, just as the atrocious outrages committed in Munster and Connaught entailed the exceptional legislation of 1882.* But what is the source of the exceptional disorders that have entailed exceptional legislation for Ireland? Is it national sentiment? Is it political discontent? Is it the desire for a domestic legislature? No.

* Molesworth's *History*, iii., pp. 330-335.

